

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 055418
ORIGIN IO-13

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 055418

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, KS, KN

SUBJECT: ROK MOFA OFFICIAL CALLS ON DEPARTMENT

1. ROK MOFA INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DIRECTOR CHEUNG WOO-YOUNG CALLED ON IO DEP ASST SEC BAKER MARCH 9 TO DISCUSS HANDLING OF KOREAN ISSUE AT 32ND UNGA. HE FOCUSSED ON IMPORTANCE OF CORE GROUP TO COORDINATE LOBBYING ACTIVITIES, NEED TO HEAD OFF POSSIBLE NORTH KOREAN DRIVE AT UPCOMING APRIL NON-ALIGNED COORDINATING COMMITTEE (NACC) MEETING IN NEW DELHI, UNGA GENERAL COMMITTEE COMPOSITION AND ROKG EFFORTS ALREADY UNDERWAY.

2. ON CORE GROUP, CHEUNG SAID LAST YEAR'S PERFORMANCE WAS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 055418

GOOD AND HE LOOKED FORWARD ONCE AGAIN TO EARLY CONVENING OF MORE OR LESS SAME COUNTRIES TO BEGIN SIMILAR EFFORT. SEVERAL OF THESE COUNTRIES HAD ASKED ROKG, HE SAID, WHEN CORE GROUP WOULD GET UNDERWAY. CHEUNG WONDERED WHEN US WOULD DECIDE TO CONVENE CORE GROUP. BAKER EXPLAINED THAT WE HOPED KOREAN ISSUE WOULD BE KEPT OFF UNGA AGENDA THIS YEAR, THAT NORTH KOREA'S SUPPORTERS SO FAR DID NOT

APPEAR TO BE PREPARING FOR ANOTHER CAMPAIGN AND, THAT WE THEREFORE DID NOT BELIEVE INTENSE CORE GROUP ACTIVITY NECESSARY RIGHT NOW. W'EN CHEUNG PRESSED WITH QUERY AS TO HOW LONG WOULD ROKG HAVE TO WAIT, BAKER

SAID PROBABLY UNTIL EARLY APRIL. IN MEANTIME, THE PLANNED MARCH 22 LUNCHEON IN NEW YORK OF CORE GROUP PERM REPS WITH ROKG FOREIGN MINISTER WILL PROVIDE EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON CURRENT SITUATION AND TO INDICATE THAT CORE GROUP REMAINS A POTENTIAL FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH WHILE AVOIDING IMPRESSION OF HIGH VISIBILITY ACTIVITY. CHEUNG AGREED.

3. AS FOR NACC MEETING, CHEUNG SAID ROKG HAS LEARNED FROM GOI SOURCES THAT, WHILE THERE IS NO SEPARATE AGENDA ITEM ON KOREA, ANY MEMBER CAN RAISE ISSUE. SINCE IT GENERATED CONTROVERSY AT COLOMBO LAST YEAR, BAKER OBSERVED, KOREAN ISSUE IS REGARDED AS DIVISIVE. BECAUSE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WILL OCCUPY ATTENTION OF NACC MEMBERS, WE BELIEVE LEADING LDC MODERATES WILL WANT TO AVOID THIS CONTENTIOUS TOPIC. TOO MUCH LOBBYING WOULD NOT NECESSARILY HELP THOSE NACC LEADERS WHO WANTED TO PLAY DOWN KOREAN ISSUE AS THEIR OWN INCLINATIONS MIGHT THEN BE LABELLED AS US IN-SPIRED. CHEUNG NONETHELESS THOUGHT IT USEFUL TO LET AT LEAST SOME OF NACC MEMBERS KNOW THAT ROK AND ITS SUPPORTERS OPPOSE NOTION OF BRINGING KOREAN ISSUE INTO UNGA AGAIN. BAKER SAID THAT SINCE MOST OF NACC PLANNING WAS TAKING PLACE IN NEW YORK, LOBBYING AMONG THE RELEVANT PERMREPS THERE WOULD BE APPROPRIATE. US INFLUENCE WITH MANY OF CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 055418

NACC MEMBERS WAS LIMITED AND THEREFORE ROKG SHOULD BE MAKING INDEPENDENT APPROACHES AND ENCOURAGING SELECTIVE APPROACHES BY FRIENDLY CORE GROUP MEMBERS AS APPROPRIATE. CHEUNG COMMENTED THAT THIS ACTIVITY HAD STARTED ALREADY. BAKER STATED THAT WE WOULD BE GLAD TO ASK US REP TO INCLUDE KOREAN ISSUE IN HIS DISCUSSION WITH SELECTED UN PERMREPS WHO WILL BE GOING TO NEW DELHI.

4. CHEUNG THEN RAISED SUBJECT OF UNGA GENERAL COMMITTEE (GC) COMPOSITION SAYING IT WAS HIS ASSESSMENT THAT N. KOREANS WITHDREW THEIR RESOLUTION IN PART BECAUSE THEY LACKED SUFFICIENT SUPPORT IN GC TO DEFEAT POSSIBLE DEFERMENT MOTION. FOR THIS REASON, CORE GROUP MEMBERS SHOULD TRY TO ENSURE THAT "FRIENDLY" COUNTRIES WERE ELECTED TO GC THIS YEAR. BAKER OBSERVED THAT REGIONAL GROUPS ESSENTIALLY DETERMINE THEIR OWN REPRESENTATIVES ON GC AND IT COULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE FOR NATIONS, LIKE US, TO TRY TO EXERT INFLUENCE; ROK ITSELF MIGHT BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO DO SO. CHEUNG REMARKED THAT ROKG HAD COMPILED

TEN YEAR GC MEMBERSHIP LIST, WOULD EXAMINE LIST CLOSELY TO JUDGE POSSIBLE NEW GC MEMBERSHIP AND ASCERTAIN WHAT SHOULD OR COULD BE DONE TO CHANGE IT. BAKER SAID THAT WE COULD HELP ENCOURAGE ESPECIALLY QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS FROM FRIENDLY COUNTRIES TO SEEK COMMITTEE CHAIRMANSHIPS AND HENCE POSITIONS ON GC.

5. CHEUNG SAID THAT BECAUSE NORTH KOREAN EFFORTS TO BROADEN ITS DIPLOMATIC TIES HAD STEPPED UP RECENTLY (CITING GUYANA, NIGERIA AND CHAD), ROKG ACTIVITIES ALSO HAD EXPANDED. THIRTY-SEVEN COUNTRIES, DIVIDED INTO THREE CATEGORIES, HAD BEEN IDENTIFIED AS KEY TARGETS (COMPLETE LIST WILL BE PROVIDED BY ROK EMBASSY). CHEUNG COMMENTED RUEFULLY THAT US POLICIES ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOME COUNTRIES SUCH AS ARGENTINA AND URUGUAY HAD COMPLICATED ROK EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE THEIR POSITION ON KOREAN ISSUE BUT THAT SEOUL WAS DETERMINED TO ADVANCE ITS INTERESTS REGARDLESS OF OBSTACLES ENCOUNTERED.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 055418

6. CHEUNG GAVE US FIRM IMPRESSION THAT INITIAL ROKG HESITANCY LAST YEAR ON VALUE OF A COUNTER-CAMPAIGN TO HEAD OFF N. KOREAN EFFORTS HAS COMPLETELY VANISHED. THAT VIEW HAS BEEN REPLACED WITH CONVICTION THAT CORE GROUP SHOULD MEET SOON TO ASSESS NATURE, INTENSITY AND CHANCES FOR SUCCESS OF N. KOREAN EFFORTS AND AGREE ON COUNTER-STRATEGY. SENSE OF URGENCY AND NEAR ANXIETY THAT CHEUNG CONVEYED OVER FACT THAT CORE GROUP HAD NOT YET MET WAS UNEXPECTED AND POSSIBLY CONNECTED WITH CONCERN THAT THIS REFLECTED SHIFT IN US POLICY. WE BELIEVE CHEUNG SATISFIED THAT US WILL COOPERATE ACTIVELY IN GETTING CORE GROUP UNDERWAY IN APRIL WHEN WE HAVE ASSESSED NACC OUTCOME. ANY OBSERVATIONS YOU MAY HAVE ON CHEUNG'S PRESENTATION WOULD BE APPRECIATED.

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